

Mayor's Message

May 2012

Each year at this time, it is my opportunity to provide a message explaining the state of the budget and present my recommendations for the next fiscal year to the City Council. I would like to share a portion of my address with you.

Murray City, like the rest of the Country, has been on a financial roller coaster for the last three years. Most of the time, the coaster has been traveling on a downhill slide only leveling out periodically. The good news is that we are starting to see a slow, but steady upward progression.

We have held our property taxes steady during this time. City departments have made repeated cuts in budgets and capital projects have been limited. Employees have not received additional compensation, but have willingly supported us as they have continued to accomplish their jobs in a stellar manner.

We have taken advantage of this time to work on completing a new strategic plan that provides focus on the direction for the City to move in the future. As part of this process, we also created a Capital Improvement Plan. This gives us the opportunity to undertake larger purchases over several years, if necessary, and allows us to rotate equipment and vehicles in an orderly fashion. This year the CIP Committee included recommendations for these projects:

- Funds to replace outdated Police radios and move to UCAN for dispatch service
- Purchase specific replacement vehicles
- Refurbish one of our older fire engines
- Add an additional ½ million dollars to roads for a \$1.8 million dollar total including Class C funds
- Replace the rusted stairs in the Park Center Pool
- Build a new restroom at Southwood Park

I have recently been made aware that there will be an increase to the tipping fees for TransJordan Landfill. We will need to address these increased costs and should consider a fee increase to handle these expenses. A Water and Storm Water Study is currently underway that may indicate a need to accomplish more storm water improvements at a faster pace. This, too, may generate the need for a small fee increase. These are both enterprise funds and need to be kept whole to provide the services that are received.

While our revenues continue to slowly improve, the steps that have been taken in past years have helped us weather these financial challenges. We have cut costs and looked at every operation to make us as fiscally responsible as possible. As a result, our reserves are healthy, which gives us the flexibility to take care of unforeseen situations that always arise as we provide services. Our employees have been the backbone of these efforts and I am recommending a cost of living adjustment for them. I am looking forward to a smoother ride this year and invite you along as Murray City moves forward and upward.